

From: Stephanie (038) Ted Coopman
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/21/01 2:03pm
Subject: MICROSOFT SETTLEMENT

Dear Ms. Hesse,

I am extremely concerned about the proposed settlement in the Microsoft Anti-trust case. I feel the settlement is wholly inadequate to curb Microsoft's illegal behavior and fails to adequately address several key issues that are critical to not only the future of computer and internet based business, but has broader societal implications. I discuss my specific concerns below:

Microsoft is a Remorseless Repeat Offender

Microsoft has shown no willingness to accept responsibility for its actions. In fact, it still adheres to the concept that it is innocent of any wrongdoing. Earlier conditions placed on Microsoft for its anti-competitive behavior were completely ignored. To think that this company will simply be polite and follow the tepid suggestions of the Department of Justice(DOJ) is sheer folly. If Microsoft believes it is doing no wrong and they have not be censured for their activity, it will, as it has in the past, continue to behave in the manner that has brought it so much wealth and power. Microsoft is the same as the repeat offender thief who feels that they are somehow above the rules and laws that apply to everyone else. Microsoft has violated its parole (so to speak) and should be hit with the maximum penalty.

Settlement Sets a Bad Example

This settlement will have so little impact on the computer and internet related markets and conditions as well as the ability of Microsoft to operate in preferred anti-competitive mode, that other companies will not see anti-competitive monopolistic behavior as anything other than a successful business model. If we, as a society, believe that harsh sentences are required to deter illegal behavior by others, how can we give Microsoft a pass in this case? Rather than an example of the harsh fate awaiting those who defraud the public, this settlement would be an example that the DOJ is a paper tiger who will not hold companies responsible for their actions.

Any Settlement Without Requirements for Interoperability is Useless

What makes Microsoft so dangerous is not that its size, but its actions. Microsoft intentionally makes its software so it will not run well with other competing products or even industry standard code. This combined with their dominance in the market makes any real competition

impossible. For example, Microsoft Internet Explorer will not accurately read standard HTML, the foundation of the internet. Nor will it read HTML generated by most other HTML composing software. It is designed to only accurately read code produced by another Microsoft product, Frontpage. As with Microsoft Java, this code has no real deviation or innovation related to the original code, other than elements designed to foil competing software or coding formats. This makes extra work for those trying to make alternative formats function with the ubiquitous MS operating systems and integrated applications. Interoperability is a critical element for the development of the internet. To purposely sacrifice this on the alter of monopoly control and corporate greed is unacceptable. This intentional interference with attempts for consistent interoperability must be stopped.

The Microsoft Monopoly is a Threat to National Security

With the focus on "cybersecurity" by the current administration, it is amazing that this issue has not come up in conjunction with this case. Time after time, worms, virus's and other cyber-assaults have wreaked havoc on computer systems world wide costing billions of dollars. The main form for entering all these systems has been Microsoft Internet Explorer and the Outlook Email system. Weaknesses in this program are so easy to exploit and the connections between the program and the MS OS are so numerous that anyone with a few classes in programming can crash millions of computers. This is the computer equivalent of planting a forest with the same type of tree. One bug can wipe out the whole lot. Microsoft's monopolistic attitude of "ship it now and fix it later" leaves our computer networks open to attack. The recent glaring security fault in Windows XP is just the latest example. This is a clear example of how Microsoft's actions are a threat to the general public. The US Government has a specific interest in making sure that there is a diverse mixture of internet software to blunt the threat of attack. Microsoft's intentional interoperability thwarts many attempts to harden systems by using alternative software.

This Settlement Will Not Eliminate or Redress Harm Done to Businesses and Consumers

I have personally been harmed by Microsoft's actions. I have wasted hours of programming time trying to make code function on Microsoft Internet Explorer. Code that is technically correct and runs on every other interface. Because of the market dominance of Microsoft, I must make this code work. This is not caused by some superior aspect of this program, but by intentional meddling that ensures only code written in Microsoft Internet Explorer, Frontpage, or MS Office versions will look correct. This is to crush any competitors product. This Microsoft software is not superior in functionality or operation. In fact, it generates useless extraneous code that doubles or triples the size of coded pages which consumes more hard-drive space and makes website run

slower. This also slows down the internet. Because Microsoft controls such a large market share, I am forced to use Microsoft software in order to move data other computers. I have little or no choices for programs because I would have to convert them to a MS program first or alter the files name so Microsoft products can read them. There is NO technical need for this. I own Apple computers and the Apple OS will read ANY document no matter what the title. If Microsoft decides it doesn't want to write compatable programs for another OS, that OS is doomed.

In conclusion, I urge the DOJ to reconsider this settlement. Microsoft will not comply with any remedy as long as they fail to admit wrong doing. Steps must be taken to ensure all software has the ability to operate with Microsoft's products. Microsoft must be forced to adhere to industry standards for HTML, Java and other code that allow functionality and interoperability. They must be severely punished and forced to adhere to all remedies by a oversight body that has the power to force compliance. Microsoft must be forced to support alternative OS such Linux and Apple. The penalties for Microsoft's actions must serve as a dire warning to any other company who dares to defraud the public and abuse United States Law.

Sincerely,
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